

# COUNTY OF YORK

## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** September 7, 2000 (BOS Mtg. 09/19/00)

**TO:** York County Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** Daniel M. Stuck, County Administrator

**SUBJECT:** Statewide Mutual Aid Program

This year, during its 2000 session, the Virginia General Assembly approved the establishment of a Statewide Mutual Aid (SMA) Program. The development of the SMA Program was the result of several years of work by a committee consisting of most of the organizations aligned with emergency response in the Commonwealth, a number of State agencies, the Virginia Municipal League, the Virginia Association of Counties, as well as the Local Government Attorneys Organization. The Statewide Mutual Aid Program was developed to assist cities and counties to more effectively and efficiently exchange services and resources, especially in response to a major disaster wherein assistance needs to be provided from one area or region of the state to another. SMA resolves inconsistencies and uncertainties concerning the insurance and liability coverage of emergency workers when deployed from one locality to another and takes full advantage of opportunities for federal/state reimbursement of deployment-related costs. This program is supplemental to, and does not affect, existing day-to-day mutual aid agreements that typically exists between adjacent or nearby localities.

Participation in the Statewide Mutual Aid Program provides an effective mechanism for assistance between localities during a major disaster. The need for having such a capability statewide has been recognized in recent years, especially where localities outside of an impacted area are asked to assist localities that are impacted by an emergency. In many of these cases, the process of providing assistance between localities could have been accomplished in a more efficient manner if this program had been in place. This program is similar to those that exist in other states that have shown that assistance between localities can be provided much quicker and more efficiently with concerns about liability and reimbursement being virtually eliminated.

The program is in two parts. Under the authorizing resolution, which is before you this evening, cities and counties will sign on to the concept of statewide mutual aid, thereby agreeing to provide assistance when asked and if able to do so. This resolution is the model format that was developed specifically for this program. Then, in time of emergency, an Event Agreement can be quickly developed and consummated, whereby the specific resources to be provided and the terms and conditions of the assistance will be identified and officially agreed to by both Requesting Party and Assisting Party. Under SMA, any type of assistance may be requested and provided. However, the types of personnel or task forces to be deployed most often will have been pre-identified and expected practices for insurance, liability coverage, and reimbursement will have been established in advance. In other words, form and structure will be provided in advance in

order to establish common expectations and procedures for implementation. This guidance is included in the Implementation Guidebook.

The following points summarize the benefits of the Statewide Mutual Aid Program:

- Provides form and structure setting forth common procedures and exceptions for mutual aid
- Solves potential problems and concerns related to liability, insurance and reimbursement up-front
- Has the active support of all local government management and professional emergency responder member organizations statewide
- Does not interfere with day-to-day agreements or other state agency sponsored mutual aid arrangements or programs already in place
- Provides a mechanism (if needed) for the reimbursement of deployment-related costs from the Requesting Party to the Assisting Party and, in turn, potentially for the subsequent reimbursement of some or all of these costs from the federal government and/or the state government to the Requesting Party, especially in the event of a federal disaster declaration
- A political subdivision's responsibility to respond is based on the availability of their resources

With your approval of R00-151, the County will have an additional mechanism to effectively receive assistance or provide assistance during certain emergencies/disasters. I, therefore, recommend approval of this resolution.

Kopczynski/3612:ese  
Attachments